



# NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

**TODD P. GRAVES**

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**NOVEMBER 9, 2004**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

UPDATE: PROJECT CEASEFIRE  
**2 MEN SENTENCED, 2 PLEAD GUILTY**  
**TO ILLEGAL POSSESSION OF FIREARMS**

**KANSAS CITY, Mo.** – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that two men were sentenced and two pleaded guilty in federal court today, in separate and unrelated cases, for illegally possessing firearms. Today's sentencings and guilty pleas, Graves said, mark additional progress under Project Ceasefire, the district's ongoing anti-crime initiative.

\* **Donald D. Lawrence**, 39, of Independence, Mo., was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Fernando J. Gaitan, Jr., this morning to two years and six months in federal prison without parole for being a felon in possession of several firearms.

On April 8, 2004, **Lawrence** pleaded guilty to being a felon in possession of six firearms. By pleading guilty, **Lawrence** admitted that he was in possession of a Ruger Security Six .357-caliber revolver, a Ruger New Model Single Six .22-caliber revolver, a Remington semi-automatic 12-gauge shotgun, a J. Stevens .22-caliber rifle, a Remington .22-caliber rifle and a Marlin 30/30 Winchester rifle on Jan. 20, 2004. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for any felon to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Lawrence** has 1989 criminal felony convictions for tampering with utilities and stealing, a 1989 criminal felony conviction for receiving stolen property and 1982 criminal felony convictions for robbery, burglary, stealing and tampering with utilities.

**Lawrence** was originally charged with being a felon in possession of a firearm in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury on Jan. 27, 2004, in Kansas City.

This case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney David A. Barnes. It was investigated by the Independence, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

\* **Matthew R. Tatham**, 22, of Lee's Summit, Mo., was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Fernando J. Gaitan, Jr., this morning to one year and six months in federal prison without parole for being an unlawful user of a controlled substance in possession of a firearm.

On June 29, 2004, **Tatham** pleaded guilty to being a user or addict of a controlled substance in possession of a firearm. By pleading guilty, **Tatham** admitted that he was in possession of a Winchester 20-gauge shotgun and a Leinad 9 mm rifle (a weapon made from a firearm) on Sept. 30, 2003. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for any user or addict of any controlled substance to be in possession of a firearm. At the time he possessed the firearms, Graves said, **Tatham** was a user of marijuana.

**Tatham** was originally charged in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury on March 2, 2004, in Kansas City.

This case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jess E. Michaelsen. It was investigated by the Lee's Summit, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

\* **Delbert A. Jones**, 21, of Kansas City, Mo., pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Ortrie D. Smith this morning to being a felon in possession of a firearm.

By pleading guilty, **Jones** admitted that he was in possession of a Davis Industries .32-caliber semi-automatic pistol on July 19, 2004. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for anyone who has been convicted of a felony to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Jones** has three 2003 criminal felony convictions for possession of a controlled substance, tampering and resisting arrest.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Paul S. Becker. It was investigated by the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

\* **Timothy J. Sears**, 30, of Independence, Mo., pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Gary A. Fenner this morning to being a person under felony indictment in possession of a firearm.

By pleading guilty, **Sears** admitted that he was under felony indictment when he also possessed a Jennings .22-caliber semi-automatic pistol between Jan. 26, 2004, and May 4, 2004. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for any person under felony indictment for a crime punishable by imprisonment for terms exceeding one year to possess any firearm or ammunition.

**Sears** was originally charged in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury on Aug. 13, 2004, in Kansas City.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jess E. Michaelsen. It was investigated by the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

**Project Ceasefire**

Project Ceasefire, launched in October 1999, is a cooperative initiative by federal and local law enforcement and the Kansas City Crime Commission that targets for federal prosecution persons who unlawfully use or possess firearms.

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This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at  
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